(a) whether a Bell Jet Ranger Helicopter was gifted under the United Nations Development Programme for conducting survey of forests resources;

(b) if so, the details there of;

(c) whether there was any agreement to transfer this he opter from Vayudoot to M/s Aparna Aviation after taking rupees one lakh;

(d) if so, the terms on which it has been given to M/s Aparna Aviation and how the balance amount will be recovered from the Company;

(e) whether the Pawan Hans Limited had demanded this helicopter before the agreement; and

(f) if so, the reason for not giving it to the Pawan Hans Limited?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA):(a) and (b). A Bell Jet Ranger Helicopter VT=DYP was procured in 1967 by the Government in the Ministry of Agriculture under UNDP assistance for Pre-Investment Survey of Forest Resources. On completion of the Project, the ownership of this Helicopter was transferred to the then Directorate of Agro=Aviation, Ministry of Agriculture in 1976. This Helicopter was then transferred to Vayudoot alongwith the transfer of functions and assets of the then Directorate of Agro=Aviation under the Ministry of Agriculture. The ownership of the helicopter now vests with Vayudoot.

(c) and (d) Vayudoot Limited have entered into an agreement with M/s Aparna Aviation to hire out the helicopter on dry lease basis for a period of one year from the date of the commencement of lease, against a payment of Rs. 20 lakhs to be recovered, in equal monthly instalments, in advance.A sum of Rs. 1 lakh has already been paid to Vayudoot Limited, by way of advance. The certificate of airworthiness of the helicopter is yet to be renewed.

(e) and (f) . Yes, Sir. Pawan Hans Limited were interested in the wet lease of the helicopter. The terms offered by Pawan Hans were not found acceptable by Vayudoot Limited.

[*English*]

Safety for Workers at Bombay High Platforms

6461. SHRI RAJNATH SONKAR SHASTRI :
SHRI SUSHIL CHANDRA VARMA :

Will Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news item captioned "Bombay High officer missing" appearing in the Hindustan Times dated August 8, 1991;

(b) if so, the facts thereof and the reasons therefor;

(c) the efforts made or are likely to be made to trace the person, and

(d) the number of such incidents in the past and the measures taken to safeguard the lives of the workers working on the Bombay High Off-shore Platforms?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI B. SHANKARANAND) : (a) to (c): Shri Ajay Kumar Gupta, Assistant Executive Engineer (Mechanical), ONGC who was on 14 day

shift duty on BHS Platform from 12.7.1991 was found missing in the early hours of 23.7.1991. Immediately a through search of the entire complex and the adjoining area of 20 miles radius was made, but neither Sh. Gupta nor his body could be found. The matter was reported immediately to the Yellow Gate Police Station and the father of Shri Gupta was also informed over telephone on the same day. In addition to the investigation of the incident by police, ONCG have appointed a departmental enquiry committee to enquire into the incident.

(d) Only one such incident had taken place in the past. All possible safety measures are taken to safeguard the lives of persons working in offshore installations of ONGC. Safety devices such as sefety boats, safety rinks, escape ladders, life rafts, life jackets and life vests are provided on each of the offshore installations/rigs. In addition, the engaged on offshore duty are also imparted training in sea survival and fire fighting. A thorough medial check-up is also conducted before they are posted on offshore duty.

[*Translations*]

Hiring out of Helicopters

6462. SHRI SIMON MARANDI : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) the number of apprentices at present receiving training for flying helicopters, the minimum period of training fixed for them and the number of trained pilots available in the country at present;

(b) the steps taken by the Government to look after the work of hiring out the helicopter itself; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA): (a) Presently, eight trainee pilots-six Vayudoot and two from Pawan Hans - are undergoing flying training at Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Urban Akademi. They are required to undergo 100 hours of flying on helicopters for obtaining the Commercial Pilot Licence. The number of trained helicopter pilots in Vayudoot and Pawan Hans is three and ninety respectively.

(b) and (c) Hiring of helicopters is done on commercial and operational considerations by their owners, namely, Vayudoot and Pawan Hans.

Catering Department at New Delhi Station

6463. SHRI SIMON MARANDI : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of Government has been drawn to the news-item captioned "Railway ke khan pan vibhag ko laklhon ka ghata"appearing in Hindi daily 'Jansatta 'dated August 11,1991;

(b) if so, the facts thereof;

(c) whether the catering department of Rail Yatri Nivas near New Delhi Railway are running in losses;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(e) the action taken to improve catering department?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MALLIKARJUN) (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Certain facts and figures contained in the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India on Railways for the year ended 31.3.1990 have been quoted in the news item.